

and the Alabama Field Office of USDA/NASS are proud The Alabama Department of Agriculture and Industries to present the 47th edition of *Alabama Agricultural Statistics*. The numbers contained in this publication are a testimony to the importance of agriculture in this state. Agriculture is the No. 1 industry in Alabama. Agriculture receipts for 2004 total over \$5 billion, with over \$40 billion impacting our state's economy. The agriculture industry employs over 467,000 people, constituting 21% of the state's workforce.

Not only do farmers provide the food and fiber we need, they will be an important asset in the future when it comes to special projects like finding alternative fuels. Alternative fuels will be derived from corn, soybeans, switchgrass, and other biomass, all products produced by Alabama farmers.

Some of the best agricultural products in the world are grown or produced right here in Alabama. I am committed to helping our farmers and producers maintain their success in the coming year. In this issue of *Alabama Agricultural Statistics*, we pay tribute to Alabama's farmers.

Ron Sparks
Commissioner

Alabama farmers are truly the backbone of this bulletin. Without their willingness to spend time with our enumerators in completing agricultural surveys, the story of Alabama's agriculture would not be told accurately. This edition honors both our farmers and our enumerator corps who work closely with them.

My personal thanks goes out to Alabama farmers, our enumerators, and the State office staff for preparing this issue of *Alabama Agricultural Statistics*.

Herb Vanderberry
Director

